

Skammel, napper, no clue?

On the loss of the *-el* and *-er* suffixes in Afrikaans

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Outline

Introduction

Typology of Germanic affixes

The experiment

Discussion

Conclusion

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- ▶ 2 verbal diminutive suffixes in Germanic: *-el* en *-er*

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Some Afrikaans and Dutch examples:

- (1) *hobbel/hobbelen* ‘to rock’
- (2) *blikker/flikkeren* ‘to flicker’
- (3) *doesel/doezelen* ‘to dose’
- (4) *knapper/knapperen* ‘to crackle’

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 1. They can be attached to the same set of morphological stems (verbal, nominal, non-lexical root)
 2. Pragmatically they often express irritation or affection

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- ▶ Based on the typology of Germanic affixes of Creemers et al. (2018), we have claimed that the Dutch and Afrikaans *-el* and *-er* suffixes are level Ia suffixes (Cavirani-Pots et al. to appear)

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- ▶ A level Ia affix is an affix that is positioned the closest to the stem in relation to other affixes (more on this in the next section)

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- ▶ A level Ia affix is an affix that is positioned the closest to the stem in relation to other affixes (more on this in the next section)
- ▶ However, it seems as if these suffixes are no longer perceived as suffixes in Afrikaans
- ▶ ***Aim of this talk:*** present experimental results that confirm this intuition, and discuss its theoretical implications

Introduction

Typology of Germanic affixes

The experiment

Discussion

Conclusion

Typology of Germanic affixes

- ▶ Creemers et al. (2018) present a typology of Germanic affixes:

Properties of affixes

Properties	Level I		Level II
	Level Ia	Level Ib	
Can affect stress pattern?	YES	YES	NO
Output flexible wrt category?	YES	NO	NO
Can attach to a root?	YES	YES	NO
Relative position wrt stem	1	2	3

Typology of Germanic affixes

Level Ia: *-iek*

1. *canon* ‘canon’ > *canoniek* ‘canonical’
2. *pan-iek* (nomen); *canon-iek* (adjectief); *ant-iek* (noun or adjective)
3. both *pan-* and *ant-* are roots

Typologie van Germaanse affixen

Level Ib: *-(e)lijk*

1. *aanhoud* ‘continue’ > *aanhoudelijk* ‘continuously’
2. *aanhoud-elijk* ‘continuously’ (adjective); *vijand-elijk* ‘hostile’ (adjective); *vro-lijk* ‘merry’ (adjective)
3. *vro-* is a root
4. level Ib suffixes follow level Ia suffixes
 - ▶ *publ-iek-elijk* **publ-(e)lijk-iek* ‘publicly’

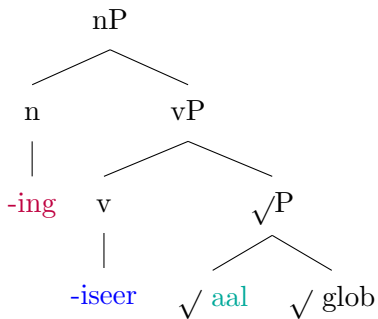
Typology of Germanic affixes

Level II: *-heid*

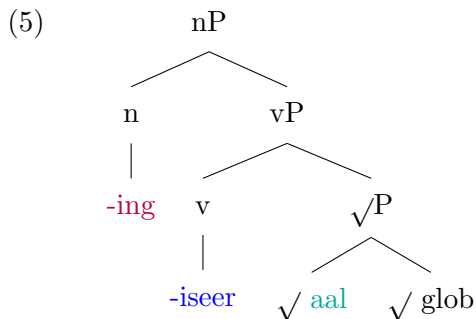
1. *beleefd* ‘polite’ > *beleefdheid* ‘politeness’
2. *schoon-heid* ‘beauty’ (noun); *scheef-heid* ‘flexure’ (noun);
beleefd-heid ‘politeness’ (noun)
3. *schoon*, *scheef*, and *beleefd* are all lexical stems
4. *publ-iek-elijk-heid* **publ-heid-iek-elijk*
**publ-iek-heid-elijk* ‘state of being public’

Typology of Germanic affixes

(5)

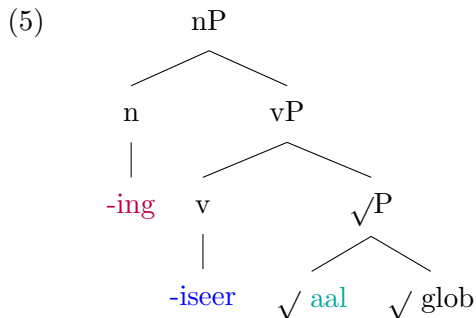


Typology of Germanic affixes



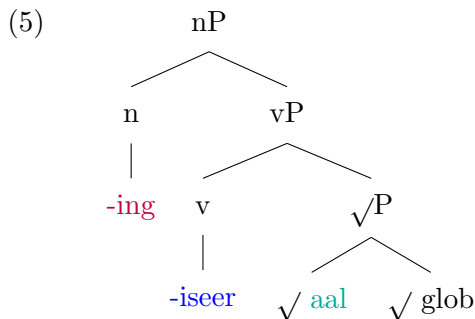
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- ▶ Level Ib affixes are categorically rigid because they spell out a categorial head; they can select a root
- ▶ Level II affixes are categorically rigid because they spell out a categorial head; they cannot select a root

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- ▶ They are furthermore always positioned the closest to the root

Typology of Germanic affixes

Nederlands		Afrikaans	
<i>-el</i>	<i>-er</i>	<i>-el</i>	<i>-er</i>
hakk-el-ig	knapp-er-ig	hakk-el-rig	glibb-er-ig
*hakk-ig-el	*knapp-ig-er	*hakk-rig-el	*glibb-ig-er
cirk-el-ig	modd-er-ig	korr-el-rig	sluim-er-ig
*cirk-ig-el	*modd-ig-er	*korr-rig-el	*sluim-ig-er

- Dutch *-ig* and Afrikaans *-(e)(r)ig* are level Ib suffixes

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- ▶ Dutch *-ig* and Afrikaans *-(e)(r)ig* are level Ib suffixes
- ▶ They can only be placed linearly to the right of the *-el* and *-er* suffixes

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- ▶ The *-el* and *-er* suffixes thus seem to be level Ia suffixes
- ▶ However, a second possibility is that they are no longer suffixes at all, but have become part of the root itself
- ▶ We suspect that this is the case for the Afrikaans suffixes

Introduction

Typology of Germanic affixes

The experiment

Discussion

Conclusion

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- ▶ To test speakers' awareness of the meaning of the *-el* and *-er* suffixes: nonsense word experiment

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- ▶ *Our assumption*: if speakers perform badly at guessing the meaning of these suffixes → these suffixes have lost their suffixal status

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- ▶ Per suffix, five nonsense verbs containing that suffix
- ▶ Control group: a number of verbal prefixes (*ver-*, *be-*, *ont-*, *her-* and *mis-*)

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- ▶ Imagine *nap* means ‘to eat’. What do you think *napper* means?
- ▶ Speakers could type down their answer in a white box

The experiment: participants

- ▶ 243 native speakers of Dutch completed the experiment
- ▶ 94 native speakers of Afrikaans completed the experiment

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- ▶ Before analysing the data: manual annotation of the answers
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 2. whether their description of the meaning contained the semantics of the affix
- ▶ The *-el* and *-er* suffixes: all answers were counted as correct if they contained a meaning related to iteration and/or attenuation
- ▶ Verbal prefixes: annotation based on the semantic description of these prefixes by the Handbook of Dutch Morphology (Haas & Trommelen 1993)

The experiment: results

	Dutch	Afrikaans
	<i>average correct (%)</i>	<i>average correct (%)</i>
<i>-el</i>	63,1	36,8
<i>-er</i>	67,0	26,6
<i>be-</i>	79,8	42,6
<i>ver-</i>	66,9	45,8
<i>ont-</i>	89,3	68,6
<i>her-</i>	77,4	70,8
<i>mis-</i>	78,4	64,4

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- ▶ They scored low on the correct semantics of the suffixes
- ▶ As well as on the identification of the nonsense word as a verb

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- ▶ The Afrikaans speakers score lower on the task in general
- ▶ They are performing unexpectedly ‘weak’ on the *be-* and *ver-* prefixes
- ▶ *Topic for future research:* does this last result correlate with a lower productivity of the *be-* and *ver-* prefixes compared to their Dutch counterparts?

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The experiment: results

- ▶ A preliminary check:
- ▶ 150 randomly selected Dutch *be-* verbs: 85 hardly ever used/sound archaic in Afrikaans
- ▶ 150 randomly selected Dutch *ver-* verbs: 75 hardly ever used/sound archaic in Afrikaans
- ▶ I.e. these prefixes might be less productive than their Dutch counterparts

Introduction

Typology of Germanic affixes

The experiment

Discussion

Conclusion

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- ▶ Assuming level Ia suffixes as roots, univerbation would in these cases mean:
- ▶ The ‘main’ root and the ‘suffixal’ → one single root in the lexicon

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- ▶ Univerbation between two roots or between two features should technically be allowed
- ▶ *Theoretical prediction*: univerbation between a root and affix is only possible if this affix is a level Ia affix

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- ▶ Beavers & Kartz-Karboonen (2020): root meaning is sometimes more complex than previously thought
- ▶ *Future work*: making the morphosemantic analysis of these ‘fused’ roots more explicit

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Typology of Germanic affixes

The experiment

Discussion

Conclusion

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- ▶ Theoretically, the univerbation of two roots should be possible
- ▶ *Future work*: the morphosemantics of these ‘fused’ roots, and a comparison of the derivational system of Dutch and Afrikaans in their entirety

Dankjewel! Baie dankie!